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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [KJUS](#) [PREL](#) [RW](#)  
SUBJECT: PRESIDENT KAGAME OPEN TO HAVING INTERNATIONAL  
JUDGES ON RWANDAN PANELS IN ICTR TRANSFERRED CASES

Classified By: Ambassador W. Stuart Symington for reasons 1.4 b,d.

11. (C) In a meeting with Rwanda's President, Paul Kagame and Minister of Justice, Tharcisse Karugarama, Ambassador at Large for War Crimes Issues Stephen Rapp thanked the Government of Rwanda for accepting prisoners transferred from the Special Court for Sierra Leone, underscoring the importance of the Rwandan action. Rapp voiced USG support for transferring International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) cases to be tried in Rwanda. He highlighted the achievements of the ICTR in bringing justice to victims and establishing a clear and vitally significant record of the Rwandan genocide so that there was no chance that the genocide not be denied. Rapp stated the ICTR has fulfilled its mandate but it was equally important for the ICTR to close and finish its work. Rapp expressed his disappointment over the ICTR's failure to transfer its remaining cases to Rwanda for trial and said that the window for such transfers is soon closing. The ICTR Prosecutor will make one more try to transfer cases in early 2010.

12. (C) Rapp stated the USG does not want the ICTR judges to reject the transfer request to Rwanda and Rapp said that he had met with Prosecutor General Ngoga and proposed the idea of Rwanda allowing international judges to sit on a multi-judge panel on the ICTR cases. Agreement to that procedure would, Rapp thought, reduce the space for the ICTR judges to rule against the transfer of cases to Rwanda. Kagame asked MinJus Karugarama if he had any objection and then replied favorably to Rapp, noting that this arrangement would be far better than the current situation of no case transfers. Kagame noted the great harm done to Rwanda by past ICTR rulings denying the case transfers. Kagame instructed Karugarama to continue discussions with Rapp to explore an acceptable modality for instituting a procedure that would appoint international judges for transferred cases and thereby facilitate the transfer of the ICTR cases to Rwanda.

SYMINGTON